

**‘WHAT ARE THE DUTIES OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES TOWARDS EACH OTHER?’
(Eph 5:33) Richard Steele in Puritan Sermons 1659-1689, volume 2**

1. The connection “therefore”
2. The direction “let every one of you”
 - (1) Universal obligation
 - (2) Particular Application
3. The summary description
 - (1) Sum of every husband’s duty “love his wife”
 - i. For a rule
 - ii. For a reason
 - (2) Sum of every wife’s duty “reverence her husband”

Doctrine: every husband should love his wife as himself,
& every wife should reverence her husband.

Proofs: throughout OT & NT, notably Paul in Eph 5:22ff, Col 3:18ff and Peter in 1Pet 3:1ff

Not all duties are specified because:

1. These are the most frequent failings
2. These form the sum of the rest

I – Mutual Duties

1. Mutual cohabitation
2. Mutual love
3. Mutual fidelity, especially in marriage-bed and secrets
4. Mutual helpfulness:
 - (1) The yoke of cares
 - (2) The yoke of crosses and troubles
 - (3) The yoke of Jesus Christ
5. Mutual patience
6. Mutual endeavours for each other’s salvation
7. Mutual marriage-chastity
8. Mutual care of each other’s health, wealth and contentment
9. Mutual prayer

II – The Husband’s Duties

The great duty of every husband is to love his own wife

(I) The Nature and Property of this Love:

1. For the ground of it
2. For the extent of it
3. For the degree of it
4. For the duration of it

(II) This Love’s Pattern:

1. As Christ loved the church:
 - (1) Heartily, without dissimulation
 - (2) Freely
 - (3) Holy, without impurity
 - (4) Great, without compassion
 - (5) Constant, without alteration
 - (6) Active and fruitful love
2. As himself:
 - (1) Tenderly
 - (2) Cheerfully

(III) This Love’s Effects:

1. In Word:

- (1) By diligent instruction
- (2) By gentle reproof
- (3) By ready encouragement
- (4) By reasonable comfort

2. In Deed:

- (1) In providing what is necessary and convenient
- (2) In tenderness
- (3) In setting a good example
- (4) In yielding to reasonable requests
- (5) In trusting her in domestic affairs
- (6) In behaviour towards her & use of authority
 - i. Keeping it wisely
 - ii. Using it mildly

III – The Wives’ Duties

The great duty of every wife is to reverence her husband

Reason: creation => God’s ordering

(I) The Nature of Reverence:

1. Honour and Esteem
2. Love
3. Fear

(II) The Pattern of Reverence:

1. As the church does Jesus Christ
2. In subjection – free, willing and cheerful
3. As members do the head

(III) The Effects of Reverence:

1. In Word

- (1) words *of* her husband
- (2) words *to* her husband

2. In Deed

- (1) by obedience to his direction & restraints
- (2) in asking for and hearkening to his counsels & reproofs
 - in the disposition of children
 - in the disposition of a servant
 - in entertaining strangers
 - in disposing of her husband’s goods
- (3) in her behaviour towards him – cheerful & respectful

IV – Directions

1. Maintain purity in soul & body when single
2. Be considerate in your choice
3. Study the duties of marriage before you enter into it
4. Resign yourselves totally to God & his will
5. Settle your affections well at the beginning
6. Pray for:
 - (1) Wisdom
 - (2) Humility
 - (3) Uprightness